



SCOTT SLINGER

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# TIME

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## THE NATION



BUNDY

### THE ADMINISTRATION

#### The Test of Reality

Last week, at the request of John F. Kennedy, General Maxwell Davenport Taylor, 59, former (1955-59) U.S. Army Chief of Staff, agreed to return to active duty with the title of Military Representative of the President. Taylor, who in the wake of the Cuban fiasco recently completed a top-secret study of U.S. cold war capacities will keep watch on military planning for world crises, serve as the White House's watchdog on the work of the Central Intelligence Agency. A brainy, courageous combat warrior, but not much of a team player, Taylor is likely to get a tepid "welcome back" as far as the Pentagon is concerned. Many top military thinkers suspect that Army Man Taylor—an ardent believer in strong, but conventionally armed ground forces—will have a greater say with the President than the Joint Chiefs, who are supposed to serve as Kennedy's principal advisers.

The Pentagon was not alone in doubting the wisdom of the new appointment. For no matter how talented Maxwell Taylor is, he will be one more voice added to the clamoring chorus of advisers who fight for John Kennedy's ear as the President attempts to build and enforce the nation's foreign policy.

Does It Work? A President owes it to himself, and to his country, to keep informed and seek the best advice available. There is no perfect way to cull ideas—Franklin Roosevelt relied more on his White House troubleshooters than on his cabinet; Dwight Eisenhower on an Army-style staff system. But the test of any method is and must be pragmatic: Does it work? Even more than F.D.R., John Kennedy has chosen to rely on a large,

select squad of brain trusters. Creating policy, the President gathers his advisers in study groups and task forces, gives them freedom to cross over and through the lines of authority.

By the crucial test of reality, John Kennedy's system is not working. In the field of foreign policy, the record is sorry. When trouble has struck, the Kennedy solution has seemed to be activity instead of action, the summoning of still one more voice to the councils of cold war. Thus the Taylor appointment could be seen as a symptom of underlying administrative ills.

*Primus inter Pares.* By law, Secretary of State Dean Rusk is the President's chief adviser on foreign policy. Yet in the current White House conferences on new policies for Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and disarmament, Rusk is just one of many voices, ranking no higher than *primus inter pares*. In deciding his policy, John Kennedy does indeed listen to Rusk; but he may just as likely turn to his squad of White House professors and kibitzers, principally to Arthur Schlesinger and McGeorge Bundy of Harvard, Walt Rostow of M.I.T. Time after time, Kennedy reaches out past Rusk to cull ideas from Paul Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Washington Lawyer (and Truman's Secretary of State) Dean Acheson; Special Presidential Consultant Henry (The Necessity of Choice) Kissinger; Disarmament Adviser John McCloy; or Presidential Assistant Theodore Sorensen. During a crisis, the President may rely for both intelligence data and contingency plans on the State Department's new Special Operations Office, headed by Career Diplomat Theodore Achilles.

Nowhere has the Kennedy system



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